



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2011-02373

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: Cost Of Riots

Request and Answer:

Question 1

How much did it cost to police recent riots in East Belfast in June 2011, which began on June 20?

Question 2

How much did it cost to police recent riots on streets of Northern Ireland on the Eleventh night?

Question 3

How much did it cost to police rioting in Ardoyne on the Twelfth night 2011?

Question 4

How much did it cost to police rioting in Ballyclare on July 9 2011?

Question 5

How much in total did it cost to police riots on streets since those in East Belfast up until those in Portadown on the night of July 15?

Answer

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland, when refusing to provide such information (because the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit) to provide you the applicant with a notice which states that fact.

It is estimated that in order to provide an accurate response to your request the cost of complying with your request for information would exceed the "appropriate costs limit" under Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450. (18 hours).

I have been advised that to provide a total cost to cover the rioting in your request would include all recorded information such as salaries, overtime and other associated expenses such as fuel, vehicles, refreshments etc.

Returns would be required from several Districts, Ops Support Department (Technical Support Groups, Armed Response Vehicles, Roads Policing and Water Cannon), Crime Ops (Air Support),

Transport regarding any damage to vehicles and Procurement and Logistic Services operational catering provided to police officers).

In relation to overtime alone the research would require analysis of overtime hours on Options for those Departments who use it but it would also require significant manual analysis of overtime records for those Departments who do not have Options.

To estimate costs associated with any damage to vehicles would require identification of the specific vehicles and the cost of repairs to be estimated with the assistance of Transport Services branch. The extracted information would then need to be costed and the time taken in this exercise would further increase the time for supplying an overall time estimate.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter should be considered as a Refusal Notice, and the request has therefore been closed.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland have also considered whether we can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request to bring it under the cost limit however the nature and structure of the information unfortunately makes this impossible.

Submission of a refined request would be treated as a new request, and considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, including consideration of relevant Part II exemptions.

Under our Section 16 duty to provide assistance I can advise that after the majority of parades have concluded the PSNI will undertake a through exercise in estimating the costs of policing all parades and all serious disorder during or following them. This information will be presented to the Northern Ireland Policing Board and will then also be made publicly available through the PSNI website.

Please also find below a link to a previous response issued regarding the interface trouble in East Belfast which I hope will be of benefit.

http://www.psni.police.uk/riots_east_belfast.pdf

If you have any queries regarding your request or this decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible, or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing foi@psni.pnn.police.uk.

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public

domain via our website @ www.psni.police.uk

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.